

➤ India's African Engagement

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India's African engagement has become more organised in the past five years as New Delhi has sought to fashion a rejuvenated role in the continent on the back of expanding business. Following on from a distinctive history of connections, the key drivers of India's more recent relations with Africa feature strategic objectives linked to political goals of Indian foreign policy and wider international politics, coupled with the imperatives of sustaining and expanding economic growth amidst high external resource dependence. While the government has become more involved in organising India's Africa partnership, Indian business has been more actively pursuing economic gains on the continent. India's development cooperation, including emphasis on training, is deepening at the same time as India seeks to reposition itself and become more involved in African development.

India is now more widely seen as important in Africa, even if it remains upstaged by China. However, Africa is not the priority for India that many assume, or might appear to be, if New Delhi's rhetoric is taken at face value. India has more important foreign policy priorities, grounded in its regional neighbourhood and the considerable domestic challenges facing the world's most populous democracy. Nonetheless, Africa has become a more important engagement for the Indian government and especially Indian business, which has led the way in actively engaging different parts of the continent.

This chapter offers a short sketch of India's African engagement. It begins by arguing that India's historical connections and unique identity credentials remain important today. Second, it outlines the key political and economic drivers of India's engagement with Africa. Third, it discusses how, in a somewhat ad hoc process, the government of India's has sought to develop its African partnership. The fourth section suggests that Indian business has been at the forefront of recent relations as part of growing economic relations with important state backing. The final section, demonstrating the mixed nature of economic interests, development assistance and political objectives, discusses how India's efforts to contribute developmentally to Africa have lately come to the forefront of its policy engagement and promise to become more central in the years to come.

HISTORY

History matters in myriad ways to India's relations with Africa. Different histories are constitutive influences in India's multifaceted relations with the continent today. The past is active in the present, and it goes back a long way. Notions of civilisational connections between India and parts of Africa — such as ancient links between the Nile Valley and the Indus Valley — remain popular. Before Africa's decolonisation, India had a much more involved role in the continent, which featured human movement from India to regions such as east Africa. This role initially stemmed from India's distinctive position within the British Empire and increased after 1947 because of its shared experience of colonial rule. A distinctive aspect of Indian engagement takes the form of large diasporas in Africa. Whereas Chinese migration to Africa is historically quite new in its current form, the deeper Indian presence means a different historical relation.

Overall, the shared experience of colonialism has been most formative. India has served as an example for colonial Africa. The Indian National Congress, for instance, was a model for certain African political parties like the Sudanese Graduate Congress and the Transvaal Indian Congress during the movement for independence. Such colonial connections and the post-colonial legacy continue to inform relations today.

The core principles informing India's relations with Africa demonstrate a strong sense of continuity with the 1954 *Panchsheel* principles of peaceful coexistence, based on mutual respect, non-aggression, non-interference, equality and mutual benefit. Adopted by the original 1955 Bandung Conference, these were again reaffirmed in 2005 as the basis of the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership. India continues to uphold a sovereignty-based doctrine emphasising reciprocal non-interference, equality and mutual benefit. Framed within the language of South-South cooperation, this also translates into an Indian form of South-South development cooperation, based not on a narrow form of aid 'but rather as economic, technical, and cultural cooperation for mutual benefit'.¹

While not without some basis in experience, the official language of India's Africa relations is an officially sanctioned history, edited at the expense of nuanced and sometimes more controversial histories. However, with this history and the Indian identity it carries used positively, this is important for attempting to enhance ties or, more reactively, to offset criticism. An essential dimension is the performative nature of this rhetoric, which is deployed in ritual performances that embody otherwise abstract notions of friendship or partnership. In other words, 'the performance of egalitarian solidarity' underscores India's difference from the West and its status as an alternative partner with different ideas, modalities and objectives.²

Such an approach, emphasising partnership, demonstrates the strong continuity of the post-colonial language of political and moral solidarity. In the new circumstances of a more open and globalising India, it is not always easily reconciled with recent forms of more material, pragmatic and economically-driven business. At the same time, it could be argued that as much as India's democratic status is important, including to its externally presented identity, it is the solidarity founded in its colonial past that acts as a more powerful underlying source of connection, attraction and advantage. This was underscored in India's diplomacy over Sudan's Darfur crisis, when India, comprehensively overshadowed by attention to China, engaged in its own form of solidarity politics with the government of Sudan as it sought to protect its investments in the country.

KEY DRIVERS OF INDIA'S AFRICA ENGAGEMENT

The main drivers of India's relations with Africa feature an assorted mixture of inter-related political, strategic and economic factors related to its national and international ambitions. While such drivers can be ascribed to the government of India and its foreign policy, the term 'India' clearly encompasses a much more complex set of internally diverse actors. Despite efforts to enhance the coherence of India's engagement, these do not always cohere in the pursuit of common goals. This is indicative of how Indian relations with Africa now mix government engagement with various other actors, to which Indian business is central.

A defining overarching driver is India's pursuit of strategic autonomy in new, global circumstances characterised by economic interdependence and the pursuit of status and influence in the international system. The ideal of strategic autonomy, which reprises the old doctrine of non-alignment, has recently been the subject of much debate but continues to be promoted as the core of a renewed Indian global engagement seeking to

1 Renu Modi, ed., *South-South Cooperation: Africa on the Centre Stage* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 9.

2 Emma Mawdsley, 'The Non-DAC Donors and the Changing Landscape of Foreign Aid: The (In)significance of India's Development Cooperation with Kenya,' *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 4/2 (2010), 361-79.

'enhance India's strategic space and capacity for independent agency'.³ Such an aim is couched within efforts to forge a new India's historic promotion of its own form of alternative universalism based on the moral and democratic political credentials pioneered by modern India's founding fathers, like Gandhi, Nehru or Ambedkar.

India has sought to develop and pursue a long-term strategic partnership, while at the same time following other bilateral foreign policy objectives.

One area where this is seen, if not always publicly acknowledged, is in India's relations with China. Made more competitive and compelling due to neighbourhood proximity, these have developed into an unstated form of rivalry projected onto Africa. This motivation for India's Africa policy has been especially important in the process whereby a formerly distant continent has come to be more noticed within India by a slightly wider, though still restricted domestic audience. Only in the last decade, especially since 2008, have more people within India started to take an interest in Africa, a process significantly catalysed by China's visible irruption into the continent after the globally visible third Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Beijing in November 2006.⁴

Second, India pursues wider international objectives via its African relations. Africa features in India's efforts to position itself as an aspiring smart power with global reach, trying to reconcile global aspirations with its domestic developmental imperatives and the need to balance development assistance with the promotion and expansion of its own interests in Africa. New Delhi's commitment to reforming and democratising international relations dovetails with its aspiration to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Africa is seen as a support base for this ambition, mirrored by India's support for the Security Council's ambitions for key regional African states.

Collaboration with Africa is bound up in India's wider international roles in other senses. This is seen in India's contribution to international peace and security via its active UN peacekeeping role in Africa, from which India can claim and receive credit. This is also evident in India's role in different forms of regionalism, of which the BRICS framework is today perhaps the most prominent (India hosted the BRICS Summit in March 2012 in New Delhi). However, there are other forms of engagement. One example is the trilateral India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Forum, which was agreed in 2003 and seeks to promote South-South cooperation.

Third, economic interests are a further and important driver in India's relations with Africa. Energy security clearly demonstrates this point. Holding 0.3 percent of the world's total oil reserves and a fifth of its population, India has been importing on average more than half of its crude oil needs since 1965. The 'India Hydrocarbon Vision 2025' of February 2000 called on India 'to assure energy security by achieving self-reliance through increased indigenous production and investment in equity oil abroad'.⁵ While outlining a greener, cleaner India using renewable energy, oil was at the core of this vision, galvanising efforts to find new overseas sources. India's dependency on foreign oil stood at around 75 percent in 2010 and was projected to rise to 90 percent by 2025.⁶ As a result, it is compelled to engage resource endowed African states to continue its economic growth. This is then a vital domestic driver: India's outstanding challenge continues to be lifting millions of impoverished Indians out of poverty. This is an immense challenge, especially in the face of India's recent economic slowdown to five percent growth in 2012.

3 Sunil Khilnani et al., 'Nonalignment 2.0: A Foreign and Strategic Policy for India in the Twenty First Century,' (2012), 8.

4 New efforts to publicise Africa within India are being made in order to redress the limited awareness. In 2012, for example, the IDSA launched a new bimonthly newsletter *Africa Trends*.

5 Planning Commission of the Government of Indian, *India Hydrocarbon Vision 2025* (New Delhi: Government of India, 2000).

6 Planning Commission of the Government of Indian, *Integrated Energy Policy: Report of the Expert Committee* (New Delhi: Government of India, 2006), 45.

Finally, a related factor concerns the geostrategic propulsion behind India's mounting interest in and engagement with the strategically important African Indian Ocean Rim. India's maritime doctrine, published in 2004 and revised in 2007, spelled out the immense importance of the Indian Ocean to India's security and economic development, manifest in the high dependence upon seaborne supplies of natural resources (for instance, nearly 90 percent of its oil supplies are seaborne). New Delhi's quest for natural resources — especially oil and natural gas — to power continued economic growth renders its interdependence with overseas supply sources a strategic matter.

INDIA'S AFRICA PARTNERSHIP: INCREMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

From the outside, India's Africa partnership looks well calibrated, expressed as it is in a noble and fluent language of South-South cooperation and all the impeccable credentials of mutuality and partnership that flow from this. However, even a cursory genealogy of its recent genesis and development reveals a different story in which growing links with Africa started and developed in a much more organic, ad hoc manner led by corporate and corporate-related bodies that first championed greater connections and the cause of investing in Africa. These were later institutionalised by government entities into red carpet summits.

Indian business, albeit with some support from government departments, mobilised before the Indian government in pursuing a more organised, ambitious and active outreach to Africa. In other words, the government of India did not lead, but was led to Africa, and remains beset by a policy-making capacity deficit. The first high-level India-Africa business conclave, following earlier business efforts, was organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry and India's Export Import (Exim) Bank (in association with other government ministries and the African Development Bank) in March 2005. This has become a vibrant, popular and busy annual event.

The first 'India Africa Forum Summit', attended by 14 African heads of states, was held in New Delhi in April 2008. It concluded by declaring an 'Africa-India Framework for Cooperation' — an ambitious set of commitments to advance the breadth and depth of an Indian-African partnership formally predicated upon mutual benefit. The second India Africa Forum Summit was held in Addis Ababa in 2011 and produced the Addis Ababa Declaration and the Framework for Enhanced Cooperation.

Whereas once the far-sighted internal champions of enhanced African economic relations had to work hard to get government attention, now the government is more focused on Africa.⁷ For India, its politics is held up as a comparative advantage. A notable self-articulation by Indian leaders, intellectuals and corporate CEOs is the notion that India has a benign positive image and is not regarded as a threatening power. Linked to its domestic democratic record, and other achievements such as in agriculture, this is expressed as the power of India's example and, with the ideological capital it is perceived as holding, is seen as 'India's great advantage'.⁸

⁷ Interview with corporate executive, New Delhi, India, 10 March, 2012.

⁸ Sunil Khilnani et al., 10.

ECONOMIC TIES

Following the period of neoliberal reforms of the 1990s, and in the context of pressing concern about strategic questions like energy security, Indian foreign policy became more oriented toward economic concerns, even though it has never jettisoned the more normative principles of its foreign relations. It has allowed the expansion of new economic ties at the same time as the continuation and evolution of more established forms of economic and developmental interaction.

Overall trade between India and Africa more than doubled from \$25 billion in 2006-07 to \$57 billion in 2011 — the official target for 2015 is \$90 billion. This meant that India accounted for a comparatively small proportion of Africa's trade (some 5.8 percent of in 2012), but the rate of growth in India's trade and investment has been such as to be comparable to China's.

India's economic profile in Africa is characterised by a number of aspects that conform to wider patterns. First, trade geography is concentrated: India's leading four African trade partners (Nigeria, South Africa, Angola and Algeria) account for some 68 percent of total trade (Nigeria alone accounted for 29.4 percent in 2011 and South Africa for 21.3 percent). Second, the composition of trade rests on a commodity base. Oil dominates overall trade. Africa supplies some 20 percent of India's fuel imports. African imports from India are dominated by manufactured goods. Africa had a trade surplus with India of some \$14.8 billion in 2011, mostly due to primary commodity exports (making up 91 percent of Africa's exports to India in 2010). Third, Indian investment has increased markedly in recent years, especially in agriculture, infrastructure, telecoms and mining. The majority has been concentrated in India's top ten trading partners. Finally, financial credit mechanisms are the centre of India's economic engagement, underwriting business expansion and funding a plethora of projects. The leading mechanism is Exim Bank credit lines. In May 2011, Indian Prime Minister announced a further credit of \$5 billion for Africa. Africa is the largest regional recipient of Exim Bank's total line of credits.⁹

There have been efforts to promote economic links and enhance business connections. In 2008, for example, India launched a Duty Free Tariff Preference scheme. Indian corporations have stepped up operations, with the likes of Tata Motors, Dabur, Marico, Essar Group, Godrej, Bharti Airtel or Kirloskar Brothers increasingly active in targeting Africa as a market or centre of resource extraction, like Vedanta Resources in Zambia's copper industry. Overall, India has been most active in the areas regarded as its comparative advantages such as agriculture, information and communication technology, communications infrastructure and petroleum refining. As the 2011 Summit emphasised, agriculture was one area designated for the expansion of ties, including through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. When it comes to the operations of certain Indian companies in this sector, however, it has not all been plain sailing. Notably, in Ethiopia, the likes of Karuturi Agro Products, a subsidiary of Karuturi Global Ltd., along with other Indian companies have attracted criticism for the nature of their work in the Gambella region from without India.¹⁰ There has been a small debate about 'agro-imperialism' within India as well,¹¹ indicative of emerging questions about the conduct of Indian corporations in Africa.

Energy security has influenced India's moves into the African oil sector. Partly facilitated by the Indian government and its leaders, the strategic importance of this predictably meant that hard commercial considerations have trumped the normative thrust of Indian foreign policy. Debate within India over the risks of the engagement in Sudan by its leading national overseas oil company, ONGC Videsh (OVL), predominantly focused not the morality of investing but on the company's safety. India's petro-partnership with Sudan began in 2003 when

⁹ Export-Import Bank of India, *30th Annual Report 2011-2012*, 47. Of a total of \$8,160 million, operative LOCs as of 31 March 2012, Africa accounted for \$4,313 million (and Asia for \$3,458 million). Ethiopia was the top African recipient with \$705 million.

¹⁰ The Oakland Institute, *Unheard Voices: The Human Rights Impact of Land Investments on Indigenous Communities in Gambella* (Oakland: Oakland Institute, 2013).

¹¹ Ajoy Ashirwad Mahaprashasta, 'Recolonising Africa,' *Frontline*, 23 March, 2012.

OVL bought a 25 percent stake in Sudan's main oil consortium. Further investments made Sudan one of the largest destinations for Indian foreign investment between 1995 and 2005. Following a hugely profitable peace dividend from 2005, Sudan's financial importance for OVL began to decline in 2010-2011 as growing assets in Russia began to produce significant amounts of crude. OVL encountered diminishing returns amidst declining production, insecurity, political uncertainty and then South Sudan's secession.¹² India has been working hard to nurture its relations with other major oil-producing African countries, including Nigeria, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea or Côte d'Ivoire.

The Indian business engagement in Africa extends significantly beyond energy. More than oil, India imports a range of other commodities such as coal from South Africa. One area where India stands out in its economic relations flows from Africa is its position as the world's largest customer of gold bullion (important in its relations with South Africa), and as the leading processor of diamonds, making up some 86 percent of the world market. In terms of Indian exports to Africa, there are strong links in such sectors as automobiles, with Tata buses, Maruti cars, or Bajaj motorbikes and auto-rickshaws leading operators, and the active pharmaceutical business, as a range of Indian companies look to Africa to increase overseas sales and the government plans to further 'Pharma India' promotion.¹³

DIASPORA OUTREACH

The Indian diaspora in Africa, rooted in colonial and post-colonial history, is connected with but not reducible to India. The Indian government has made efforts since the 1990s to re-engage the global Indian diaspora, including in Africa. The Hindu nationalist party, the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP), which won power in 1996, took steps to enhance connections with overseas Indians. In 2004, India's Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs was established. One of its activities is the Overseas Indian Award (*Pravasi Bharatiya Samman*), which is open to Indians in overseas countries, including those in Africa.¹⁴

Since 2003, an annual *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* convention geared toward enhancing diaspora ties has been held on 9 January, the anniversary of Gandhi's return to India from South Africa in 1915. At one such event in 2010, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh initiated an 'Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre' geared toward promoting economic ties, in which Africa and other developing regions now feature more prominently. In October 2010 a mini *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas*-Africa was held in Durban, along with other celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first indentured Indian labourers. Home to the largest number of Indians outside of India, with around 1.3 million South African Indians, South Africa is an important economic partner for India on the continent. Another such convention was held in October 2012 in Mauritius, another country of significant Indian population.

State-sponsored efforts to harness overseas Indians to wider national Indian objectives and the 'global India' vision have been complicated by the uneven nature of relations with overseas Indians and the accompanying tensions. Outside of South Africa, this is notable in East Africa, where many Indians felt abandoned following a troubled post-colonial history (notably in Uganda under Idi Amin). Today, for example, the Kenyan Indian population has an established place, multifaceted role and primarily 'African' identity that render official Indian efforts to promote diaspora diplomacy more complex and less straightforward than New Delhi might wish. New Delhi might want to advance synergies between Indian communities in Africa and India's own interests, but this is a negotiated relation with no such automatic synergies.¹⁵

12 Luke Patey, *The New Kings of Crude: China, India and the Global Struggle for Oil in Sudan* (London: Hurst, forthcoming).

13 Renu Modi, 'The Role of India's Private Sector in the Health and Agricultural Sectors of Africa' in Fantu Cheru and Cyril Obi eds., *The Rise of China and India in Africa* (London: Zed, 2010), 120-131.

14 In 2013, awards were made to Ismail E. Ebrahim from South Africa (for business) and Ashok S. Vaswani from Guinea (for community service). Previous awards been granted to people from countries including Kenya, Zimbabwe, Mauritius and Tanzania.

15 Gerard McCann, 'Ties that Bind or Binds that Tie? India's African Engagements and the Political Economy of Kenya,' *Review of African Political Economy* 37/126 (2010): 465-482.

INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

India's development assistance has become more intertwined with commercial considerations. This is partly seen in how either the Ministry of Commerce or Exim Bank has assumed more important roles in overseeing concessional finance agreements with African states. The Ministry of External Affairs had previously been the principal coordinator of Indian development assistance. Development cooperation policy is based on the twin foundations of economic and technical cooperation, with the former focusing on trade, investment and other linkages together with efforts to promote business regulation and opportunity. The latter engages with capacity building and human resource development.

A notable area where India styles itself as different in Africa is human resource development and capacity building support. This has deep roots, notably in generations of Africans educated in India, and in the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme dating to 1964 (its corollary is the Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme). India's role here is held to be different on account of its approach, including emphasis on local skills development and emphasis on 'a people centric development approach in Africa'.¹⁶ Human resource development is seen by India as a distinctive aspect of its engagement, which is competitive also through the advantages it has of a good quality affordable higher education sector and advanced IT. The 2008 India-Africa Summit launched a plethora of new training initiatives. Particularly, India committed to establishing 19 new institutions for capacity building.¹⁷ How far this agenda advances will rest partly on the extent and manner by which this programme is realised and carried out in future years.

Indian business has also been involved in technology transfer, pursuing approaches held to be applicable like the 'Triple A' strategy championed by the Confederation of Indian Industry for affordable, adaptable and appropriate technology. In 2004, India launched the Techno-Economic Approach for Africa-Indian Movement, a special credit facility for eight West African countries, to promote socio-economic development through access to Indian technology. It has also been extending support for cotton sector development in Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali and, since May 2010, Nigeria and Uganda. India's Pan African E-Network Project, with African Union cooperation, uses Indian IT expertise to link academic institutions and hospitals in 47 African countries with counterparts in India via a satellite network enabling 'tele-education' and 'tele-medicine'.

India's new development cooperation phase is proceeding amidst the on-going reality of domestic poverty and on the back of moves to reposition India in international development. India ranked 134 (out of 187 countries) in the 2011 UN Human Development Index. This places it in a medium category, but it is still beset by severe poverty. Following government insistence that all donors apart from the main six stop official flows to India in 2003, New Delhi moved to announce debt relief for seven African states. An excess of development initiatives followed. India has also been engaged in efforts to mobilise support at international bodies like the UN for its development cooperation.

India's development cooperation with Africa follows on from and contributes to New Delhi's efforts to move from a former aid recipient to a more active development actor with a wider international voice. While such ambition may for now exceed the present capability of an already overstretched government machinery, persistent debate about establishing a ministry for international development is indicative of how being more active in developing others, albeit through the mutualism of South-South means, is bound up with India's changing international stature.

¹⁶ Ajay K Dubey, 'India-Africa Relations: Historical Connections and Recent Trends' in Ajay Dubey, ed., *Trends in Indo-African Relations* (New Delhi: Manas Publications, 2010), 37.

¹⁷ These included the India-Africa Institute for Information Technology, the India-Africa Diamond Institute, the India-Africa Institute of Planning and Administration, the India-Africa Institute of Foreign Trade, 10 Vocational Training Centres and five Human Settlement Centres.

India's development cooperation is far more significant than its narrowly defined aid per se.¹⁸ In January 2012, the government of India created a new Development Partnerships Administration to harmonise the work of Indian agencies involved in development assistance under the Ministry of External Affairs and streamline aid spending. While partly indicative of the growing scale of development assistance and future aspirations, this also underlined 'the intent to manage them more effectively and strategically, including in terms of public diplomacy — building India's image around the world'.¹⁹

INDIA'S PEACE AND SECURITY ENGAGEMENT

India's peacekeeping role in Africa is framed within its support for 'African initiatives for peace and security', thus combining multilateral UN participation with efforts to enhance African-led initiatives. Much of this is officially predicated upon the necessity of peace for wider socio-economic and political developmental aims. As affirmed by Manmohan Singh at the March 2013 BRICS summit in Durban: 'Sustainable economic development requires an environment of social and political stability'.²⁰

India's UN peacekeeping, however, upstages this form of engagement. One aspect of India's peace and security engagement has been support for African regional bodies. It has thus, for example, contributed financial support to the African Union Mission in Somalia and, following the January 2013 French military intervention, to the African-led International Support Mission to Mali.

Currently ranking as the third largest contributor of UN peacekeepers in the world, India deploys some 7,840 military and police personnel.²¹ India has a long history of UN peacekeeping in Africa, dating to India's military contribution to the UN Operation in the Congo in 1960. This translates into considerable experience across the years, much channelled by the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping in New Delhi. The current UN Indian deployments include the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and large contingents in the UN Mission in South Sudan and the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. UN peacekeeping is widely cited as evidence to support India's Security Council ambition. It plays a role for India as a global actor, and is also a subject that is not only supported within India but can also secondarily promote Indian national interests.

Beyond its multilateral participation and support for African organisations on security matters, India pursues its own strategic interests. Most notably, its resource supply imperative is complicated by competition, principally from China. New Delhi moved to counter mounting Chinese activity after former Chinese president Hu Jintao ended his Africa tour of 2007 in the Seychelles. India has been increasing its military ties with African states on the Indian Ocean, including Mauritius, the Seychelles, Madagascar, Tanzania, Mozambique and especially South Africa. The Indian navy has also contributed to anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden since 2008. It has a track-record in robust policing actions, notably the sinking of a hijacked Thai trawler in 2008 and the recent capture of a Somali pirate ship off south-western Indian early in 2013.

18 Some \$22.38 million of India's aid and loan programmes totalling \$617.85 million (excluding lines of credit) in 2011-2012 went to African countries; Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs Annual Report 2011-2012.

19 Emma Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 97.

20 'India Committed to Support Africa, says Manmohan Singh,' *ANI*, 28 March, 2013.

21 See <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>.

CONCLUSION

India is neither a new actor in Africa, nor is it merely 'emerging'. In 2010, the US President Obama drew applause from the Indian parliament not only by declaring that 'India is not simply emerging; India has already emerged' but also by calling it 'a rising global power'.²² The language of India as a 'rising power' or 'emerging actor', folded as these are into the wider meta-narrative of a 'rising Africa' and Asian global economic ascendancy, is convenient. However, this is also unhelpful in conveying a simplistic uni-linear trajectory, eschewing complexity and taking official rhetoric at face value. It is revealing that some in New Delhi oppose such terms, arguing that it creates a psychology of its own for leaders out of touch with gravity. At a more basic level, this entry point neglects the much more deep rooted, interesting and problematic histories beyond a multifaceted and diverse Indian role in the African continent and, concomitantly, the new histories in the making.

While India has avoided direct competition with China in Africa, instead positioning itself to exploit its niche areas, it has been looked to more as a collaborator in African development, not only from within but also from outside the continent. Established development agencies from the US, the UK or Japan are increasingly seeking to engage and work with India on African development cooperation, even while adjusting their own development relations with India. Following the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in late 2011 in South Korea, India endorsed the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation and appeared set on a more prominent international role should it choose to pursue such a path and participate more actively. For now, in its Africa relations, it appears to prioritise its own approach and prefer the South-South partnership track.

In previous decades, India's economic relations with Africa never went 'beyond a verbal repetition of [the] South-South cause'.²³ The recent phase of enhanced business relations, expanding investment and more involved government engagement has marked a departure that if continued and sustained looks set to have an increasingly consequential significance. Whereas India's relations with the continent were previously stronger on ideology than on substance, this new underlying change has pointed to the opposite: an increasingly substantive, business-led engagement over which official rhetoric of South-South partnership is overlaid and subject to increasing strain by virtue of the nature of emerging Indian relations with Africa.

India's Africa relations in their current form remain a comparatively recent rejuvenation as an area of deliberate government attention and activity. Having moved to a more important position within India's foreign policy, yet still not a clear priority, Africa has been elevated as a policy concern sometime after Indian business mobilised into more active forms of engaging various opportunities. The government of India was widely being urged to move 'from agreement to action'²⁴ in its Africa relations. This begged the question of how, in the context of the Indian government's capacity constraints and practical limitations on its Africa endeavour, India can not only articulate but also pursue an engagement with Africa that delivers and more effectively realises the substantive principles and commitments upon which it is based. ■

22 'Full Text of Obama Speech in Parliament,' *India Today*, 8 November, 2010.

23 Ajay Dubey, *Indo-African Relations in the Post-Nehru Era 1965-1985* (Delhi: Kalinga Publications, 1990), 80.

24 Rajiv Bhatia, 'India-Africa Summit: From Agreement to Action,' *The Hindu*, 9 June, 2011.